

FUNDAMENTALS, falling in love with football - Initiating

Stages of the Framework



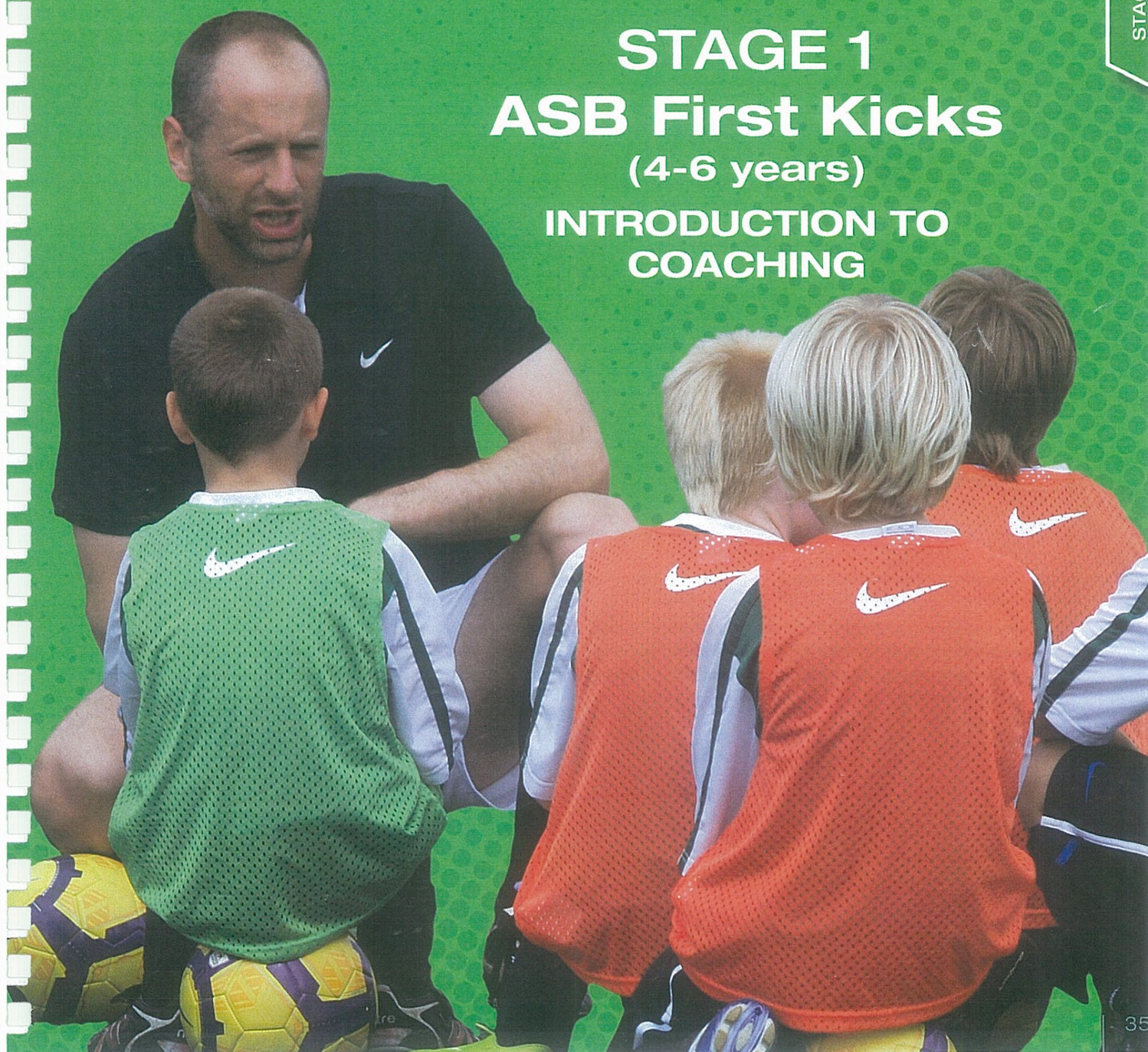


STAGE 1

ASB First Kicks

(4-6 years)

INTRODUCTION TO COACHING



INTRODUCTION

How to be an Effective Game Leader

First Kicks players are likely to be participating in organised football for the very first time, and they need to enjoy the experience if they are to fall in love with the game. For the First Kicks game leader, this means having a good understanding of the needs of young children who are just entering the game.

Four Corner Overview - Where is the focus

Technical / Tactical

Activities provide learning opportunities – allow the children to play
 Technique development takes place through fun activities that offer lots of dribbling and shooting
 Football coordination is developed with lots of touches of the ball in different activities

Physical

High energy games with lots of activity
 Activities need to improve players coordination in general
 The ball should be used to add fun
 Activities include lots of different types of movements
 Sessions need to be safe and risk free

Social / Emotional

Activities focus on individual development while in a group environment
 Activities give the player as much time using the ball as possible
 Activities need to be used as playful and fun experiences

Mental

Activities should involve opportunities to make worry free mistakes
 Activities should progress or change quickly
 Activities need to challenge players to become aware of the other players around them
 Attach stories to activities to take advantage of imagination and curiosity

The game leader must be aware of these characteristics and run sessions accordingly. This means using a range of games and activities that are based on improving the players' coordination while introducing football skills. The games and activities used in the Junior Framework cover four specific components that make up a First Kicks practice session.





The Four Key Components

The percentage of time spent on each component reflects the age-related requirements of the First Kicks player.

Focus for Training - where we spend most of our training time

GENERAL MOVEMENT

Activities involve:

- **Agility** (running, speeding up/slowing down, changing direction, stopping)
- **Balance** (hopping, jumping, landing)
- **Coordination** (combining different movements, moving with the ball, falling and standing safely)

A focus on these A,B,C's provides a foundation for players to learn more complex movement sequences later on

25%

FOOTBALL COORDINATION

Lots and lots of touches of the ball

When dribbling with the ball, allow players to explore and use their imagination

Challenge players to use different parts of the foot

25%

FOOTBALL TECHNIQUE

Core techniques involve dribbling, turning and shooting

These techniques are fundamental features of the game that players enjoy greatly

Small competitions and games should be used to motivate players to use these technique

25%

SMALL SIDED GAMES

Ssg's motivate players more than any other activity

Ssg's should involve small numbers playing in small areas

Ssg's provide the players with the chance to best use their individual skills, developed in a group setting

25%



INTRODUCTION *cont..*

How to be an Effective Game Leader

The First Kicks player needs to be the focus of any game or activity, rather than the coach. If you are new to football or new to 'coaching', don't worry that you may not know a lot. The key is to let the players play and learn throughout the activity – and interfere with these activities as little as possible. This means that you will facilitate rather than 'coach'.



| THE FIRST KICKS GAME LEADER... | THE PLAYERS BENEFIT BECAUSE... |
|---|---|
| Views each player as an individual | The individual learning styles of each player are recognised |
| Makes sure that each player is able to explore football, use their imagination and have fun | Players are more likely to have fun and feel successful |
| Provides a risk free environment where every player is fully involved in every activity | Players have the chance to make mistakes, learn from them and keep going |
| Learns about the players, takes a personal interest and gets to know each one of them | Players are able to touch the ball as many times as possible during a session |

At practice sessions, always ensure players are constantly involved. This meets their needs and provides the game leader with the opportunity to understand what players enjoy the most, and what brings them the greatest feeling of success.

Monitor players throughout the session to help you understand when and how to best progress the session in order to best meet their wants and needs.

COMMUNICATION



Keep it short and sweet

First Kicks players have lots of energy but short attention spans. They want to spend as much time as possible playing games or activities. Make sure any information you give is delivered in bite-sized chunks that are easy for the players to understand – then let them find out more during the game.

Come down to their level

Be enthusiastic, fun and energetic during sessions. Capture the players imagination through communication and stories applicable for their age, with no need to use football specific language or terms.

Be patient with the players

Ensure that you give them every opportunity to have fun, be creative and learn from making mistakes.



What do the practice sessions include?

A game leader will have achieved a great deal if he or she has built each child's confidence, self-esteem and motivation, and has helped them develop a love for the game. With this in mind, a First Kicks session should always be structured with the following in mind:

- 1 Include general coordination activities – running, jumping, tumbling and turning
- 2 Include games with lots of movement
- 3 Include small sided fun games 1v1, 1v2, 2v2, and 3v3
- 4 Include lots of familiarity with the ball – running & turning using all parts of the foot to move & control the ball.
- 5 Involve only a minimal amount of passing

All the First Kicks activities in the Junior Framework have been developed to ensure that sessions are well suited to the players. This means that inexperienced game leaders don't need to worry that they may not know enough to help the players learn. Game leaders should, however, remain close to the session. Watch how players react to the tasks. If they find tasks too hard or too easy be prepared to change something:

- 1 Change the size of target/goals
- 2 Change the part of the foot used to control the ball
- 3 Increase or decrease the number of touches
- 4 Change the area size to make it smaller or bigger
- 5 Change the rules

Hints and Tips for the Game Leader

Adopt a hands-off approach to facilitating sessions, and ultimately allow the task itself to become the teacher. Let the players explore their own relationship with the ball, discovering and creating numerous ways of moving and stopping the ball with all parts of their foot.

Here are some hints and tips that will help you give your players the most enjoyable learning experience possible:

During any game or activity you can effectively 'coach' by simply prompting players to...

Alter speed/direction: Speed may increase or decrease the number of touches used

Use different parts of the foot or body:
Inside of foot, heel of foot, sole of foot etc

Use the left foot instead of the right foot and vice versa

Create interaction by using partners and groups for dribbling within the group

You can also help the players improve their technique by...

Maintaining good Tempo:
Keep the children moving and happy

Keeping tasks to a short duration and changing them frequently e.g select a new part of the foot to use

Progressing the activity by following the players lead i.e. using creative examples of work taken from players and adding to it

Alter speed/direction: Speed may increase or decrease the number of touches used



The Key to Coaching the First Kicks Player - Let the game be the teacher!

Every activity over the following pages has been based on this principle. Now it's over to you to bring them alive by using your own personality as a coach!

Remember:

- 1 Learners learn and coaches only help the process. Guide players through games and activities and help them to find effective solutions to technical problems posed by the game
- 2 Use sessions to allow players to explore football skills and learn from being active with the ball
- 3 Accentuate the positive! e.g. "Who can be the first person to collect their ball and get ready to start this game!" "Well done, Francis! You're so good at dribbling with your right foot – can you show me how good you are with your left too?"

Equipment requirements for the First Kicks Game Leader

The following sessions aim to significantly support the First Kicks game leader in getting the best out of the 4-6 year old child. To bring alive these sessions, a ball per player, cones and bibs will be required as a minimum. Optimally, pop up goals and poles can be used, otherwise tall cones can be used to demonstrate goals and poles for sessions.

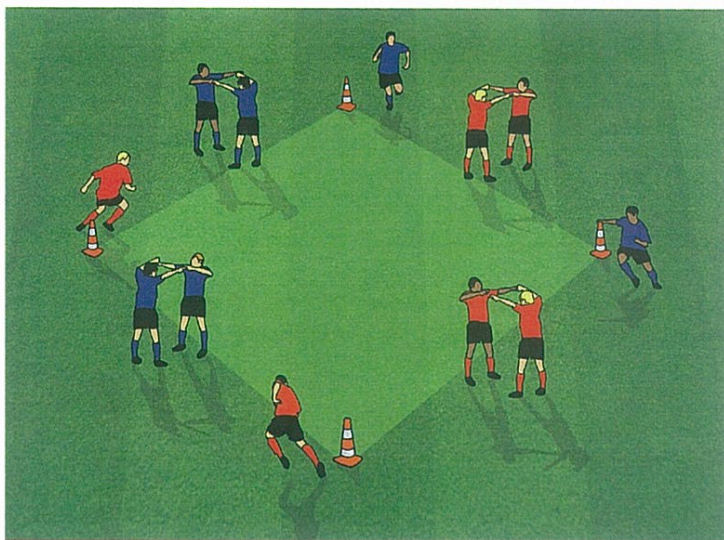


COMPONENT TRAINING - WEEK 1

CITY GATES (GENERAL MOVEMENT)

SETUP

1. Create an area as large as possible (30m x 20m)
2. Divide the players into even teams, minimum 3 players per team, spread out around the outside of area



HOW TO PLAY

1. Two players in each team make an arch (city gate)
2. On your signal the remaining players in each team have to run in single file through their own 'gate' first, and then the other teams' 'gates'
3. The first player to arrive back at their arch replaces one member of the arch, while the others continue around the circuit
4. Continue until all players have been part of the arch. The first team to do so wins

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: Vary the running to include hopping, skipping or jumping

ADVANCED: Add a ball for all those not in the arch

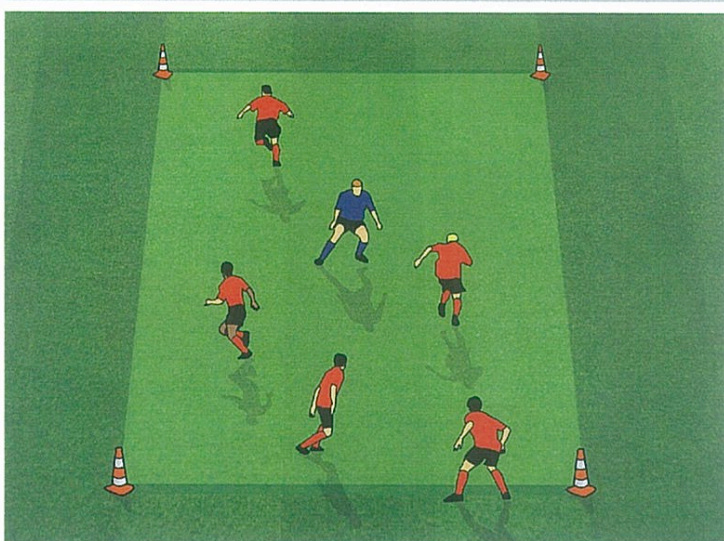
OUTCOMES

- Agility while changing direction at speed
- Balance while hopping and jumping
- Awareness of other players

JAIL BREAK (FOOTBALL TECHNIQUE)

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 20m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Choose one player to start in the middle as the 'police officer'
3. As soon as players understand the game, give every player a ball, except for the 'police officer'



HOW TO PLAY

1. The player in the middle starts as the 'police officer'
2. On your signal the remaining 'robbers' run past the 'police officer' to the other end
3. Any player tagged by the 'police officer' must 'freeze' and stay on that spot trying to tag the other 'robbers' as they pass
4. The game ends when all 'robbers' are tagged. Start again with a new 'police officer'

PROGRESSION

BASIC: Start with more than one 'police officer'

INTERMEDIATE: All 'robbers' have a ball and the 'police officer' must tackle them or knock their ball out of the area

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with close ball control
- Keeping head up for awareness of space and other players while dribbling
- Timing of the tackle



GHOSTBUSTERS (FOOTBALL COORDINATION)

HOW TO PLAY

1. The players dribble their ball inside the square while you call for them to use different parts of the foot, or dribbling combinations
2. On calling 'ghostbusters' you run around the area
3. The players 'shoot' the 'ghost' by hitting you below the knees with their ball 3 times in 20 sec.
4. The players continue dribbling after the 20 sec. is completed

PROGRESSION

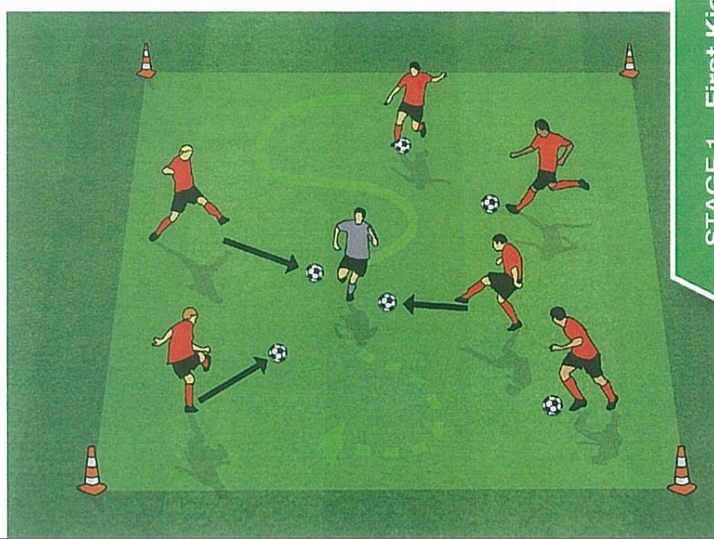
- BASIC:** Change the part of the foot used to dribble
- INTERMEDIATE:** Players can only 'shoot' with their non-dominant foot

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with the head up
- Passing accuracy over different distances

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 20m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Players (ghostbusters) start inside the square with a ball each
3. The coach (ghost) starts in the middle of the area



STAGE 1 - First Kicks (4-6 Years)

LINE BALL (SMALL SIDED GAMES)

HOW TO PLAY

1. In this SSG the teams 'score' when a player can stop the ball on the oppositions' end line
2. When a team 'scores' they leave the ball on the opposition end line and retreat, allowing play to re-start from the line
3. There are no throw ins, rather the ball is passed in

PROGRESSION

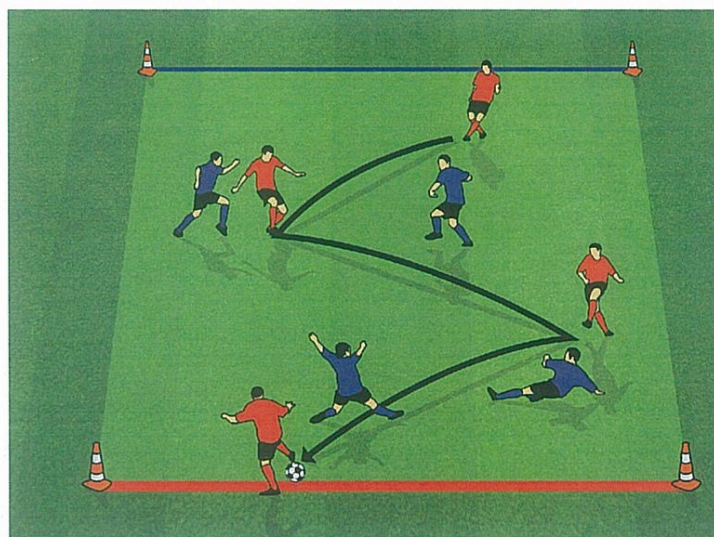
- INTERMEDIATE:** Players can only use their non-dominant foot
- ADVANCED:** Specify the number of players that have to touch the ball before a 'goal' is scored

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with the head up
- Passing over short distances
- Dribbling using different parts of the foot
- Basic awareness of other players

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 25m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Assign each team a line to attack and defend
3. Place as many balls as possible around the area for fast re-starts

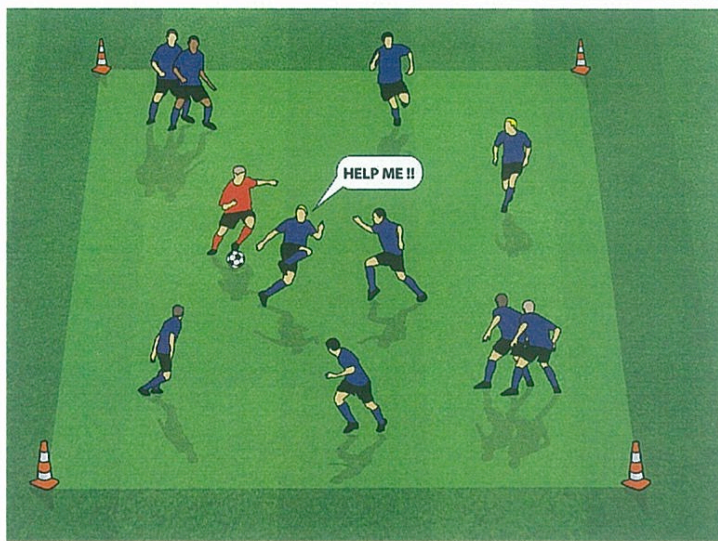


COMPONENT TRAINING - WEEK 2

HELP ME (GENERAL MOVEMENT)

SETUP

1. Using four cones create an area up to 30m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. All players start inside the area. One player is the 'hunter'



HOW TO PLAY

1. The game starts as a game of tag, with the 'hunter' trying to tag other players
2. Other players can protect themselves by calling 'help me' and taking another player's hand
3. This pair of players then stand in a line, one behind each other, making a 'tunnel' with their legs
4. They cannot be tagged, but cannot rejoin the game until another player crawls through the tunnel to free them
5. The last person tagged becomes the 'hunter' for the next game

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: Vary the running to include hopping, skipping or jumping

ADVANCED: All players except the 'hunter' have a ball

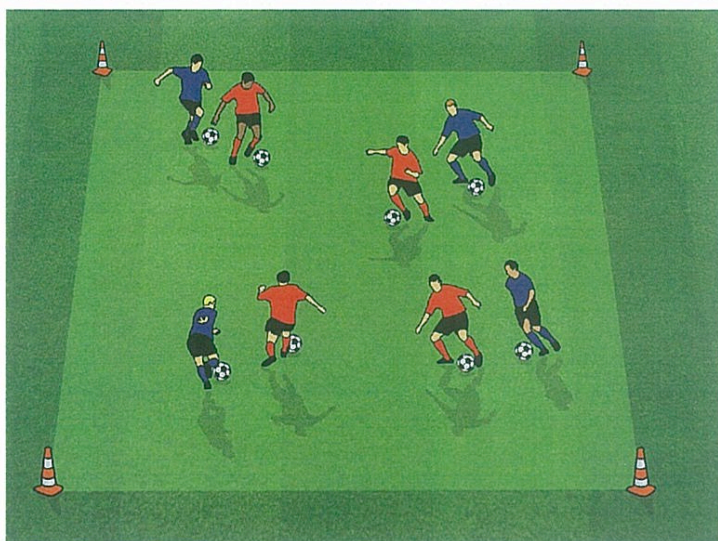
OUTCOMES

1. Agility while changing direction at speed
2. Balance while hopping and jumping
3. Encourages teamwork

TRUCK & TRAILERS (FOOTBALL TECHNIQUE)

SETUP

1. Using four cones create an area up to 30m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Split the players into pairs, each player with a ball



HOW TO PLAY

1. One player in each pair starts as the 'truck', the other starts as the 'trailer'
2. On your signal the game starts with the 'truck' dribbling around the area, leading the trailer who must follow the movements of the 'truck'
3. When you call 'stop' the players freeze and check how close they are together compared to the other players

PROGRESSION

BASIC: Use different parts of the foot

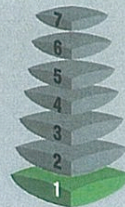
Use different turning techniques

INTERMEDIATE: Trucks have more than one trailer

ADVANCED: Trucks try to lose their trailer

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with close ball control
- Keeping head up for awareness of space and other players while dribbling
- Change of pace with the ball



DOCTOR DOCTOR (FOOTBALL COORDINATION)

HOW TO PLAY

1. The game starts with all players dribbling inside the area. They try to kick away opposition balls while keeping their own
2. If a player's ball is knocked out they must take it to their 'surgery' and wait
3. The 'doctor' can release players from the 'surgery' by tagging them. While inside the 'surgery' the 'doctor' is safe, but they can only go there to release a player
4. The game can be won by a team if they can pass the ball at the opposition 'doctor' and hit them below the knees

PROGRESSION

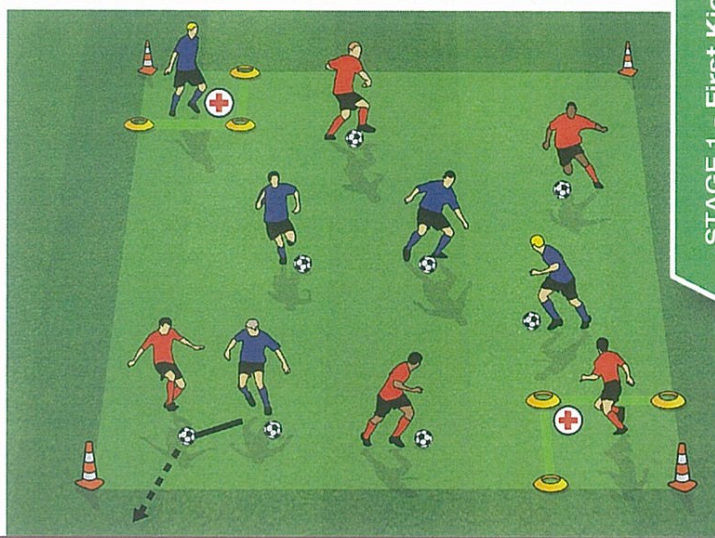
- BASIC:** Change the part of the foot used to dribble
- INTERMEDIATE:** Players can only pass the ball at the 'doctor' with their non-dominant foot

OUTCOMES

- Protecting the ball while dribbling
- Passing accuracy over different distances

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 30m x 20m
2. In two corners use 3 cones to make a 'surgery' 2m x 2m
3. Split the players into 2 teams and allocate 1 'doctor' per team
4. All players have a ball except the 'doctor'



STAGE 1 - First Kicks (4-6 Years)

2 GOAL GAME (SMALL SIDED GAMES)

HOW TO PLAY

1. In this SSG the teams score by dribbling or passing the ball through the two goals they are attacking
2. When a team scores, they retreat, allowing the opposition to start play from the goal line
3. There are no throw ins, rather the ball is passed in

PROGRESSION

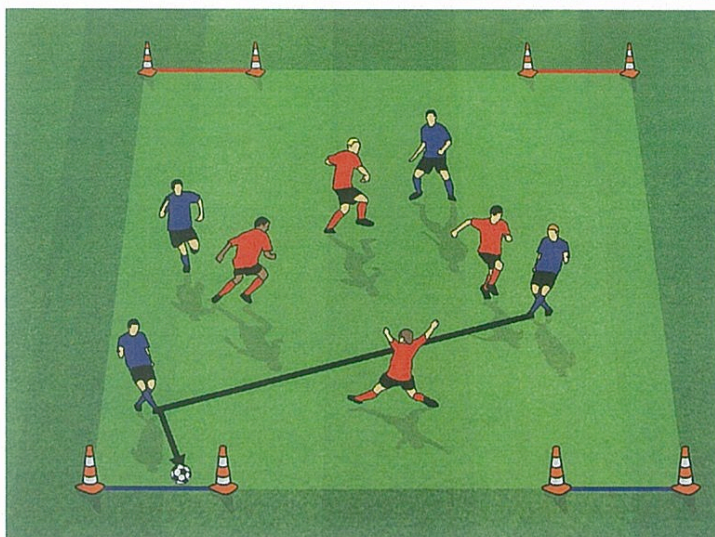
- INTERMEDIATE:** Players can only use their non-dominant foot
- ADVANCED:** Specify the number of players that have to touch the ball before a 'goal' is scored

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with the head up
- Passing over short distances
- Dribbling using different parts of the foot
- Basic awareness of other players
- Changing direction of play

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 25m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Use extra cones to create 2 goals at each end of the area. Assign each team goals to attack and defend
3. Place as many balls as possible around the area for fast re-starts

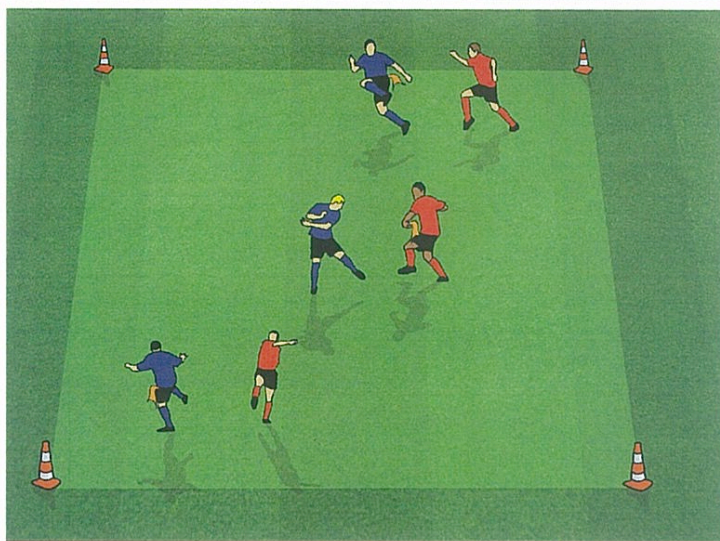


COMPONENT TRAINING - WEEK 3

SNATCH THE FLAG (GENERAL MOVEMENT)

SETUP

1. Using four cones create an area as large as possible (30m x 20m)
2. All but 2 players start inside the area with a bib (flag) tucked into the back of their shorts
3. The remaining 2 'taggers' also start in the area, but with no bib



HOW TO PLAY

1. The taggers chase the other players around the area, attempting to snatch the flag from them
2. If a player snatches a flag, they keep hold of it
3. If a player loses their flag, they become the tagger
4. The game is continuous allowing for progressions

PROGRESSION

- BASIC:** Vary the running to include hopping, skipping or jumping
- INTERMEDIATE:** Give every player a ball to dribble while they play
- ADVANCED:** Give every player a ball to dribble while they play, except the taggers

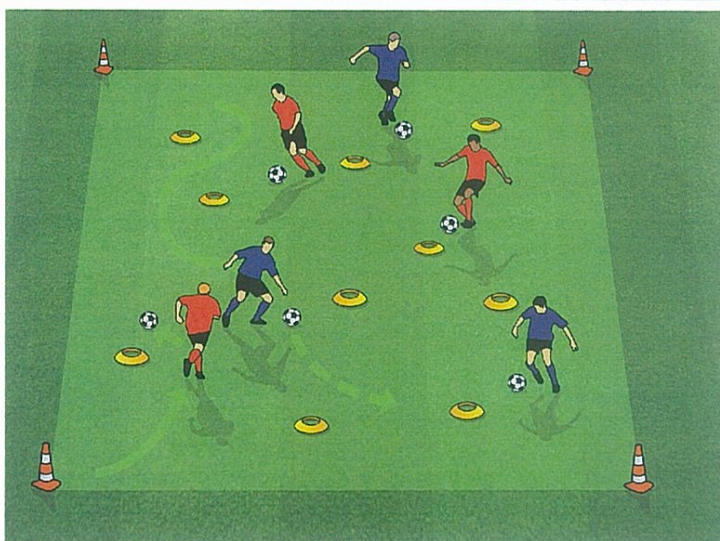
OUTCOMES

- Agility while changing direction at speed
- Coordinated speed
- Develops spatial awareness

DRIVING SCHOOL (FOOTBALL TECHNIQUE)

SETUP

1. Using four cones create an area up to 30m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Place other cones randomly within the area
3. Every player has a ball



HOW TO PLAY

1. Each player dribbles around the area (driving their car) without hitting another car or lamp post (cone)
2. You call out which part of the foot the players use to control the ball as they dribble
3. The aim for the players is to stop beside every cone (which doubles as a petrol station) and perform 5 toe taps (to fill up)
4. Only one player at a time can stop at a cone, and the aim is to fill up at every petrol station quicker than anyone else

PROGRESSION

- BASIC:** Use different parts of the foot
Use different turning techniques
- INTERMEDIATE:** Coach calls 1st, 2nd, 3rd gear etc. to encourage speed changes
- ADVANCED:** Follow a partner

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with close ball control
- Keeping head up for awareness of space and other players while dribbling
- Change of pace with the ball



BOX TO BOX (FOOTBALL COORDINATION)

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players dribble the ball around their area, using different parts of their foot as you call them out
2. You should also encourage players to use their imagination to perform different fakes, hooks and turns
3. When you call 'charge' all players reach the other area as quickly as possible using only the part of the foot they were last using

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: Players start in different areas and therefore have to avoid each other as the coach calls 'charge'

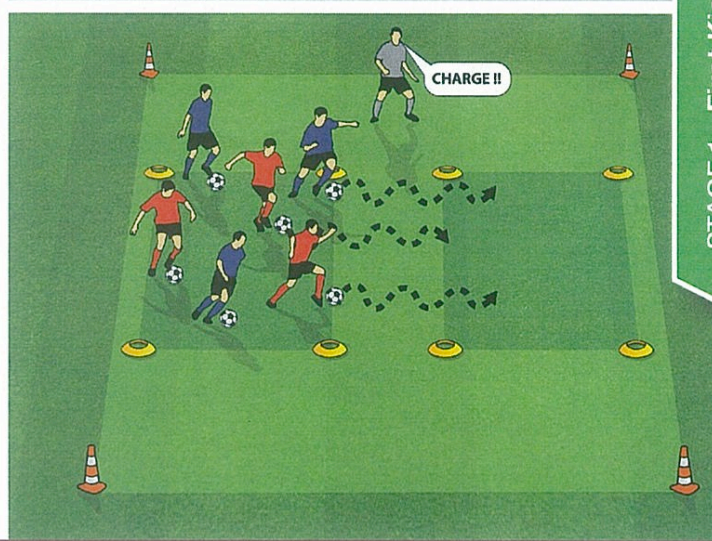
ADVANCED: Players have to juggle the ball when moving from one area to another

OUTCOMES

- Close ball control while dribbling with different parts of the foot
- Ability to use different fakes and turns
- Ability to change speed with the ball
- Juggling the ball

SETUP

1. Set up two 10m x 15m areas. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Every player has a ball and starts inside the same area



STAGE 1 - First Kicks (4-6 Years)

DIAGONAL GOALS (SMALL SIDED GAMES)

HOW TO PLAY

1. In this SSG the teams score by dribbling or passing the ball through the two goals they are attacking, placed in opposite corners of the area
2. When a team scores, they retreat, allowing the opposition to start play from the goal line
3. There are no throw ins, rather the ball is passed in

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: Players can only use their non-dominant foot

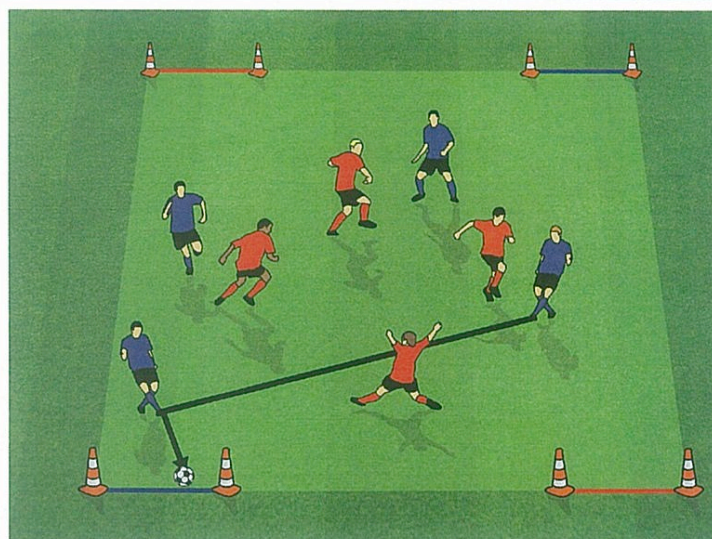
ADVANCED: Specify the number of players that have to touch the ball before a 'goal' is scored

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with the head up
- Passing over short distances
- Dribbling using different parts of the foot
- Basic awareness of other players
- Changing direction of play and angle of play

SETUP

1. Create an area up to 25m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. Assign each team goals to attack and defend
3. Place as many balls as possible around the area for fast re-starts

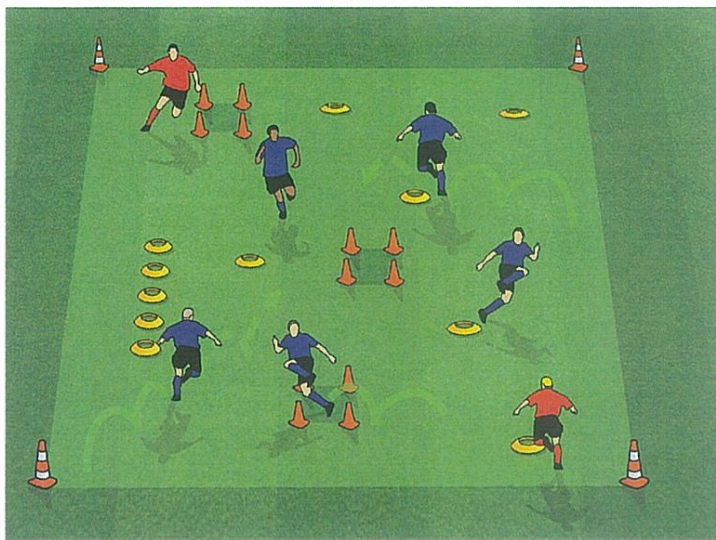


COMPONENT TRAINING - WEEK 4

ENJOYING HOPPING (GENERAL MOVEMENT)

SETUP

1. Create an area as large as possible (30m x 20m)
2. Arrange other cones inside this area to act as targets or obstacles for the players



HOW TO PLAY

1. The players spread out inside the area, and on your call hop or jump around the area in different ways
 - Hopping on the spot, backwards, sideways, forwards
 - Hop or jump AND turn on the air – ¼ turn, ½ turn or full turn
 - Over obstacles or into targets
 - Hop or jump and land as lightly as possible
 - Hop or jump in unison with other players
 - Alternate feet (bounding)
 - Consecutive hops (you call the number) before changing legs

PROGRESSION

BASIC: Jump instead of hop, but jump as far as possible with each jump

INTERMEDIATE: Follow a partner

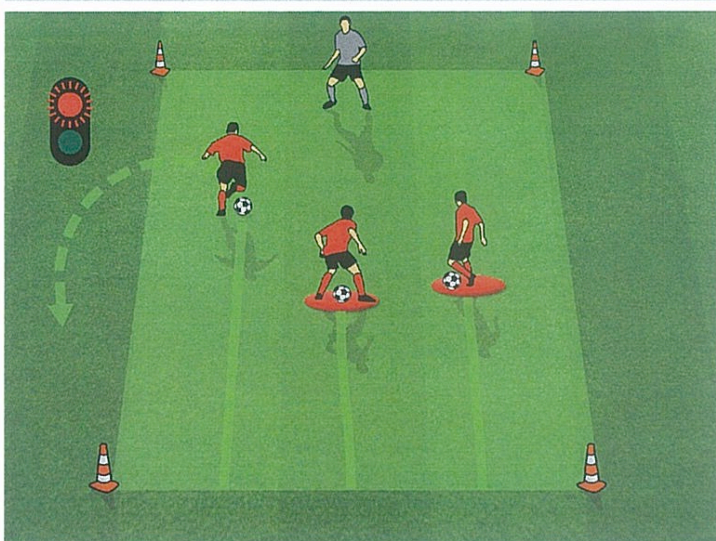
OUTCOMES

- Develop coordination
- Develop strength
- Develop ability to land off balance
- Injury prevention

TRAFFIC COPS (FOOTBALL TECHNIQUE)

SETUP

1. Using four cones create an area up to 30m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
2. All players inside the area with a ball each



HOW TO PLAY

1. All players start on the end line (car parked in the garage). You (the traffic cop) stand in the centre, facing away from the players
2. On your 'green light' call the players begin dribbling forward. When you call 'red light' the players must stop
3. After the 'red light' call you turn to check if anyone is still moving. If they are, that player is sent back to the garage to start again
4. The winners are the first players to reach the other end (top of the street)

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: The traffic cop chase. On 'red light' you turn and chase players back to the garage. Any player caught becomes another 'traffic cop'

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with close ball control, with both feet
- Keeping head up for awareness
- Stopping the ball with different techniques



ROUND THE CORNER (FOOTBALL COORDINATION)

HOW TO PLAY

- PART ONE:** In single file, players dribble the ball around the square using a different foot, or part of the foot, on each different side of the square. When they reach the finish cone they perform a turn and repeat the square (3X)
- PART TWO:** Players dribble to a corner each and then dribble to the centre cone. At the centre cone they perform a turn and go back to their start cone, then move in a clockwise direction to the next cone. They then repeat the move to the centre cone.

After each group has completed their square the groups swap.

PROGRESSION

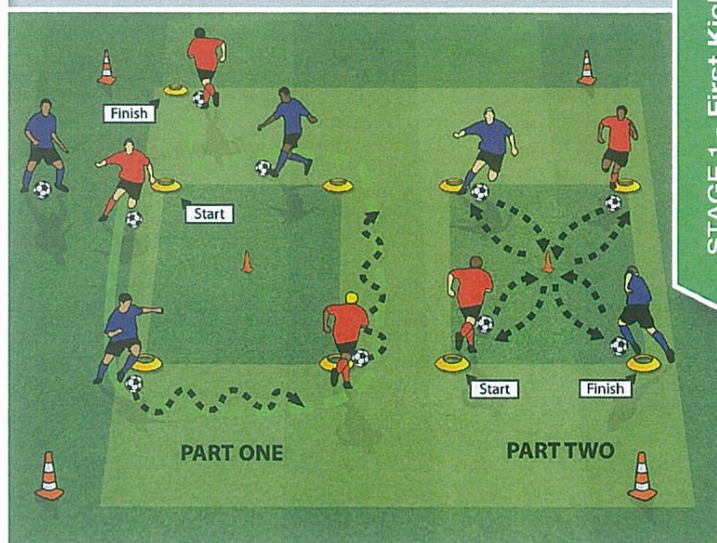
INTERMEDIATE: Add increasingly difficult dribbling movements and turns

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with close ball control, with both feet
- Keeping head up for awareness of other players
- Stopping the ball and turning with different techniques

SETUP

- Create two 10m x 10m areas. Place a cone in the centre of one of the areas.
- Set up a tall 'finish' cone 3m to the side of the start cone
- Divide the players into 2 even groups, with a ball each. Each group lines up on the start cone of an area



STAGE 1 - First Kicks (4-6 Years)

2 GOAL GAME - CLOSE RANGE SHOOTING (SMALL SIDED GAMES)

HOW TO PLAY

- In this SSG the teams score by dribbling or passing the ball through the two goals they are attacking
- They can only score a close range goal by being in the 'shooting zone'
- When a team scores, they retreat, allowing the opposition to start play from the goal line
- There are no throw ins, rather the ball is passed in

PROGRESSION

INTERMEDIATE: Players can only use their non-dominant foot

ADVANCED: Specify the number of players that have to touch the ball before a 'goal' is scored

OUTCOMES

- Dribbling and changing direction with the head up
- Passing over short distances
- Dribbling using different parts of the foot
- Basic awareness of other players
- Changing direction of play

SETUP

- Create an area up to 25m x 20m. Modify the size depending on the number of players
- Use extra cones to create 2 goals at each end of the area. Assign each team goals to attack and defend
- Place as many balls as possible around the area for fast re-starts

